

IN FOCUS

The Official Publication of the Jamaican Canadian Association

E-mail: info@jassoc.com

May 2008 Issue

BLACK FOCUSED SCHOOLS —

A BOLD STEP FORWARD

The Jamaican Canadian Association (JCA) in the past few months took a position to support the concept of Africentric schools. We applaud the Toronto District School Board for the bold decision it took at its January 30, 2008 meeting to move forward with the implementation of Africentric school(s). This decision is a concrete demonstration to the African Canadian community that the Board has heard us and has listened to the voice of the community. This decision also signals the critical need for the community to galvanize its collective power and to leverage strategic support to ensure this initiative succeeds and becomes a beacon for further progressive changes throughout the education system for African Canadian and Caribbean students, as well as all students.

For most of its 45 years, the JCA, along with many other Caribbean and African Canadian organizations, including the Coalition of African Canadian Community Organizations, have been advocating for changes and improvements in the education system. We have been calling for the need to address the systemic and structural barriers that continue to hamper, marginalize and exclude the successful educational outcome of all, and especially the majority of African Canadian and Caribbean children.

We certainly do not discount the integral role and responsibility of parents, family and community in ensuring the

successful educational outcomes for their children. However, we also must not put blinders on and dismiss the core role and responsibility of education and the education system and that of governments in this process. After all, a primary role of the education system is to prepare our children and students to undertake their role as productive citizens. We should also not lose sight of the connection between the adverse experience of African Canadian and Caribbean children in the education system and the negative social realities that so many youth, their families and communities are facing, including health issues (mental health, incidence of suicide), criminalization of youth, gun violence, accessing meaningful and well-paying jobs among others.

The community has identified one option to pursue to address this problem. This should not be based on unanimous approval of the entire population of this city, province or country for us to take action on what amounts to a matter of life and death for so many African Canadian and Caribbean children and youth.

The TDSB's decision to move ahead with the implementation of an Africentric school is just one of four resolutions that the TDSB passed as part of a more comprehensive and multidimensional approach to addressing the systemic problems that adversely impact the education of African Canadian and

Caribbean children among other students. Ontarians and Canadians must not lose sight of that fact. As well, we know that there is still substantial work that lies ahead to develop the Africentric school and to ensure, among other things, that it meets the objectives set out (for it). We (the JCA) recognize that more needs to be done to allay some of the fears and counter the misinformation that is being perpetrated to incite further objection and, in some cases, to stoke the fire of division in the community and the broader population.

Some of these immediate actions include the immediate cessation of using the terminology of "Black Focussed Schools" and using the correct terminology that has been put forward by the community and that was passed in the Board's decision – Africentric schools. We also strongly believe, that every effort possible must be leveraged by the TDSB, the Ontario Government and the African Canadian community to ensure that this initiative is not set up to fail, as many would like to see, and that it is adequately and sustainably resourced.

The very idea of the TDSB responding to the community and implementing an Africentric school, through the avenue of alternative programming, is no different than the measures that they have taken to address the needs of other communities.

Cont. on page 5

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



It has been a while since you have heard from us through our *In Focus* Publication. Without hesitation, let me emphasize how pleased we are to be back in circulation again.

As African Canadians continue to make history as a community in contributing to the evolving and changing social fabric of Canadian society, the Jamaican Canadian Association (JCA), throughout our 45-year history, now entering our 46th year of existence, has been doing its part to contribute to the collective work of African Canadians and to positively impact Canada's growth as an influential nation.

Over its 45 plus-year history, the JCA has become a pivotal institution within the Caribbean and African Canadian communities. The Association has made its mark in the Canadian context in a number of ways: From creating social and cultural support networks, building and own-

ing properties; venturing in the area of economic development with the establishment of the Jamaican Canadian Association Credit Union which operated for almost three (3 decades from 1963 – 1993); to establishing and expanding a cadre of social services programs for families, youth, seniors, disaffected groups, among others; to advocating for and impacting the legislative and policy landscape of Canada.

We have been on the leading edge of many developments and achievements in up-building Canada. Today, we continue on the path of being a pivotal force in the communities, uplifting our proud heritage and culture, while being fully immersed in addressing the socio-economic and socio-political issues impacting the quality of life for Caribbean peoples and African Canadians; and influencing the Canadian landscape.

Given the many challenges and obstacles that non-profit organizations face, including threats to their stability and longevity and, particularly within the Caribbean and African Communities, JCA's endurance and continued growth in programs and services is no small feat! In many ways we have been a beacon for others.

We are ever grateful to the

founders and founding members of this Association for their pioneering spirit and this important legacy they have left for us. We could never have reached this far without the commitment and unwavering support of our membership, including many of our founders and long-standing members who continue to be actively engaged in the Association. We also underscore the steadfast support of the wider Jamaican, Caribbean and African Canadian communities who continue to be fierce supporters and protectors of the Association. We have gone through, and still continue to face, many growing pains. However, along the way we know that our *tallawah* spirit, inherited from our African ancestors, has infused in us characteristics of determination, resilience, resourcefulness and creativity to remain steadfast and purposeful!

I trust that as you go through the pages of this issue of *In Focus*, you will find stories, knowledge, and information that will inspire, challenge and engage your mind.

Nuff Respect!

Sandra Carnegie-Douglas

JAMAICAN
CANADIAN
ASSOCIATION
995 Arrow Road
North York, ON M9M 2Z5
Tel.: (416) 746-5772

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Newsletter Layout/Printing

Letters and submissions welcome. The Editorial Committee reserves the right to edit materials for length.



The Annual General Assembly is scheduled for Sunday May 24 at 1p.m. Please note that to vote this year at the AGM, you must be a member in good standing, having paid your membership fee for 2006 and 2007.



INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



I am excited to announce that it is my first year anniversary as Interim Executive Director at the Jamaican Canadian Association. Though the JCA has been a solid member agency for over 45 years, our social services sector is still fairly young in comparison, just over 12 years. We therefore pride ourselves on our accomplishments in the sector thus far. For this we owe thanks to the dedication and commitment of the Board, Staff, Volunteers and Members.

Organizational Development, Capacity Building, Performance Management continue to be at the forefront of our vision to aspire and deliver the highest standards of service to the community. The JCA is ever evolving, and as we embrace change, we will continue to ensure that the organization's commitment to diversity and culturally specific services and programming are entrenched in the Jamaican motto which states: "out of many, one people."

One of the changes the JCA has experienced is the formation of a union. In May 2007 the JCA became a member of CUPE Local 4772.01. We are currently negotiating a collective agreement. To date the process has been amicable.

The goal for our Social Services Programs is to continue providing excellent service and care to the Caribbean African Canadian community. The Children, Youth and Family

Services (CYFS) Program provides a holistic and integrative approach to the nurturing and healing of the afro Caribbean Canadian child, youth and family. The CYFS Department has four programs: Intake, Parenting, Transition (K-CLUB), Leaders In Partnership (LIP). The CYFS staff continues to provide culturally specific service that is in great demand from our community agencies, partners, churches, the justice system and the educational system.

The Youth Outreach Worker Program participated in an extraordinary event which afforded them the opportunity to meet and engage with community members of the Chatham-Kent Black History Society. The Outreach Workers reported that this was a life altering experience for both them and the participant. They had the opportunity to visit historical sites, view artifacts and engaged with direct descendants of our ancestors who traveled the underground-railroad. It is our hope at the Jamaican Canadian Association that the agency continues to educate and bring about such awareness to the youth particularly those identified as at risk or living in priority neighbourhoods. Our Youth Opportunities Strategy program has completed its 2nd year. As the Lead for the North Quadrant, The Jamaican Canadian Association has thrived to work closely and cohesively with our partners; Promoting Economic Action & Community Health, Black Action Defense Committee, Midyanta, Jane Finch Community Centre, The Griffin Centre; and the Hincks Dell Crest Centre.

The Violence Against Women program has been revitalized with the addition of two new staff – a VAW part-time counselor and a VAW Coordinator. We are optimistic

that outreach to the community will increase the JCA's commitment to the eradication, education and prevention of violence against women in the African Caribbean Canadian community.

The Opportunity Plus program continues to provide excellent service to our client base who are seeking employment related support. The program's success is achieved through the hard work and commitment of the staff team and the partnership with the funder, Ministry of Training Colleges and University. The Opportunity Plus program is a member of the Community Partner Action Group who meets on a quarterly basis at the JCA. The Community Partner Action Group consist of over 40 members who shares resources and information and strategies on how to most effectively serve the clients.

Settlement and Adaptation Program provides services to clients who are in need of immigration related matters. Also included is support around the completion and submission of the citizenship application. Recently we have seen an increase from clients seeking assistance not only for immigration matters but also for housing and income aid.

We anticipate that the year ahead will be another exciting and engaging year. Through the dedication and commitment of the Board, Staff, Members and Volunteers, we will embark upon the journey together to fulfill the goals and mandate of the agency.

Submitted by Nzinga Walker

Though the JCA has been a solid member agency for over 45 years, our social services sector is still fairly young in comparison, just over 12 years.

Garvey the Poet – On Music:

There is music in my soul today, A joy of heart not there before:

This state of conscience I relay

To rich and proud and meek and poor.

JCA SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

JCA Scholarship Program provides financial assistance to worthy students from the Caribbean/African community, who are pursuing post-secondary studies in Ontario Universities/Colleges)

See eligibility requirements at www.jcaassoc.org

Dr. Ezra Nesbeth Scholarship (\$2000)

Sponsored by Dr. Ezra Nesbeth, a graduate of the University of Waterloo and the University of Toronto with varied and extensive experience in community and health programs. He is a strong advocate of self-help programs within communities and the workplace. Dr. Nesbeth donates generously to the Afro-Canadian community and the JCA.

I Have a Dream Scholarship (2 @ \$1000 each)

Sponsored by the Jamaican Canadian Association to assist students with significant personal achievements beyond scholastic ability. This includes personal accomplishments in spite of adversity.

Youth Affairs Committee Rising Star Scholarship (\$1000)

Sponsored by the JCA Youth Affairs Committee (YAC). YAC is comprised of a dedicated group of volunteers committed to the Personal, Social, Economical, Professional, and Cultural development of Black and Caribbean youth. YAC serves as the critical median through which the voices of youth can be heard.

Erma Collins Scholarship (\$1000)

Sponsored by Professor Erma Collins. She retired from George Brown College in 1998, after 27 years service as a professor of English and 5 years as the chairperson of the English and Liberal Studies Department at St. James Campus. Professor Collins has been volunteering for several years in the JCA and other organizations. Her lifelong commitment to education has motivated her to sponsor this scholarship.

Marcus Mosiah Garvey Scholarship (2 @ \$1000)

Sponsored by the JCA to increase awareness of Afro-Canadians of

the life, philosophy and work of Marcus Garvey. This includes his goals of universal independence and positive development of the Black Race.

Mary Anne Chambers Scholarship (\$1200)

Sponsored by the Hon. Mary Ann Chambers, Minister of Training Colleges and Universities. She is a former senior vice-president of Scotia Bank, where she earned a reputation for superior performance and responsible ethics-based leadership. Her personal commitment to education includes the sponsoring of a basic school in Jamaica and the providing of other scholarships to the John Brooks Foundation and Scholarship Fund.

Ryerson Scholarships (2 @ \$1000 each)

Sponsored by Ryerson University for one male and one female first year student attending that university. The special mission of Ryerson is the advancement of applied knowledge and research to address societal need, and the provision of programs of study that provide a balance between theory and application and that prepare students for careers in professional and quasi-professional fields. As a leading centre for applied education, Ryerson is recognized for the excellence of its teaching, the relevance of its curriculum, the success of its students in achieving their academic and career objectives, research and creativity, and its commitment to accessibility, lifelong learning, and involvement in the broader community.

Humber College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning Scholarships (\$1000)

Sponsored by Humber College for a first year student

attending that institution. Recognized for excellence and for the integrity of its programs since 1967, Humber College is one of only three colleges designated by the Ontario Government as an Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning. The College offers over 150 program options at the diploma, certificate, baccalaureate and post-graduate levels. Humber College is one of North America's preeminent colleges, receiving more applications than any other college in Ontario making it the top choice of students. At Humber, students gain the knowledge and skills they need to succeed, from professors who are leaders in their fields and who care about their students' success. 89% of Humber graduate are employed within six months of graduating and 92% of employers who hired Humber graduates are pleased with their skills and performance in the workplace.

Eva Smith Bursary (\$1000)

This bursary is named in honor of the late Eva Smith, a tireless community worker who dedicated her life to youth concerns, women's rights, immigration issues, education and community empowerment. Sponsored by the Eva Smith Achievement Association, this bursary is awarded to African-Canadian youth (including single parents and those in the justice system), who are pursuing a post-secondary education.

Barbara Thomas Bursary (\$500)

Donated by Barbara Thomas, a JCA member for over 25 years. She is a retired nurse with several years working experience in acute care and nursing administration. Barbara is a recipient of the Ministry of Citizenship Award for volunteer service.



Garvey the Poet – On Africa for the Africans:
Say! Africa for the Africans,
Like America for the Americans:
This the rallying cry for a nation,
Be it in peace or revolution

The Youth Affairs Committee is seeking new members. If you are interested, leave a message for Dwaine Osbourne at 416-746-5772.

York Regional Police Scholarship (\$1000)
Donated by York Regional Police.

The Brown Dental Scholarship (\$1000)

This scholarship is donated by Dr. Lancelot A. Brown, who was born in Montreal to Jamaican parents. His university education included 2 years of a Bachelor of Science in Honours Biochemistry, and 4 years of dental school, graduating with a Doctor of Dental Surgery all from McGill University. He then gained an additional 4 years of training and experience in the Canadian Armed Forces

Dental Services, the last two years of which he was appointed as the Officer in Charge of the Royal Military College Dental Clinic.

Anne - Marie Bonner Scholarship (\$1000)

This scholarship is sponsored by Anne - Marie Bonner, Jamaica's Consular General to Toronto. In Jamaica, Ms Bonner was a senior director in the Policy Support Unit of the Office of the Prime Minister from 1992-1998 where she co-ordinated and advised on social policy. Anne - Marie also managed and co-ordinated the San Jose Accord and Airport Privatization

projects.

The Jamaica Day Basil Duncan Memorial Scholarship (\$1500)

This Scholarship is donated by the Jamaica Day Event Board of Directors in honour of the late Basil Duncan who was a member of that Board.

The Jamaica National Building Society Scholarships (2 @ \$1000 each)

This Scholarship is donated by the Jamaica National Building Society, a financial institution that facilitates money transfers from Canada.

OPPORTUNITY

PLUS+ three week job search program is highly successful and is designed to help the mature worker find meaningful employment in the shortest time possible.

JCA IN SERVICE FOR THE COMMUNITY

PARENTING PROGRAM: The Jamaican Canadian Association's Parenting Program demonstrates a commitment to excellence and a fundamental responsiveness to the community.

The Parenting Program addresses the needs of parents and caregivers with children who are at risk and are referred by agencies such as Toronto Children's Aid Society and school boards.

The Parenting and Family Support strategy aims to prevent severe behavioural, emotional and developmental problems in children by enhancing the knowledge, skills and confidence of parents.

OPPORTUNITY PLUS+ :

This program is for people who are 40 years and older who are either unemployed or underemployed and are actively looking for work. Our three week job search program is highly successful and is designed to help the mature worker find meaningful employment in the shortest time possible. The workshops help you:

- ◆ Plan your career
- ◆ Create winning resumes and cover letters
- ◆ Tap into the "hidden job market"
- ◆ Develop and practice excellent interviewing skills
- ◆ Learn how to effectively market yourself
- ◆ Empower yourself

K-CLUB: The K-Club (K-Kujichagulia - meaning for Self-Determination). We offer both individual and group counseling.

The K-Club is instrumental in cultivating a positive relationship between the Ontario Justice System, Toronto, and York Region District School Boards to be strengthened by providing a forum for ongoing dialogue. The K-Club has had many successful results with family re-integration, reverse suspensions and expulsion by advocating on behalf of students and parents. And the reduction of court sentence for clients ranging from house arrest to community work.

Garvey the Poet – On the Tragedy of White Injustice:

Lying and stealing
is the whiteman's game;
For rights of God
nor man he has no shame
He has stolen
everywhere-land and sea;
A buccaneer and
pirate he must be,
Killing all, as he
rooms from place to
place,
Leaving disease,
mongrels-moral disgrace.

FACT: On Wednesday May 21 2008, the Toronto District School Board made the decision to open an elementary Africentric Alternative School at Sheppard Public School. The school will start as a JK-Grade 5 program at with growth as follows to include Grades 6, 7 and 8: Grade 6 in September 2010; Grade 7 in September 2011; Grade 8 in September 2012;

BLACK FOCUSED SCHOOLS cont.

It is incredulous that, at this very time of the year when, as Canadians, we are celebrating African History and Heritage month, a leading board of education in this province and Canada, has taken an unprecedented step towards levelling the playing field for African Canadian children, and at the very least, to increase their opportunities for success and to fully and meaningfully participate in Canadian society as full citizens,

this board is now coming under attack for its decision.

In the true spirit of African Heritage and History Month, this is when we expect our leaders – in government, politics, education, and every sector, to respect the choice of the community and to truly stand tall and do battle, unpopular though it may be, and be willing to take the radical steps necessary to save the

lives of our children and protect their future.

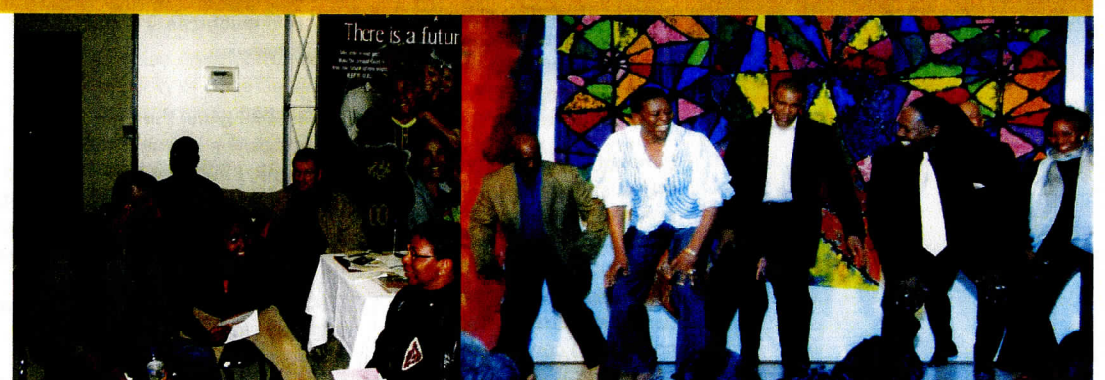
By Sandra Carnegie-Douglas
President, The Jamaican Canadian Association (JCA)



JCA in Action



JamaicanCanadianAssociation



ACHIEVING SUCCESS

If you have any doubts about your success or your achievements, I would like you to think about all that you do.

My joy, and my sense of accomplishment, has always come from helping to provide others with the opportunity to experience success.

As a child in elementary school in Jamaica, providing others with the opportunity to be successful, meant being a summer school teacher for children, children living in poverty who did not attend school during the regular school year. As a young woman in my early twenties, providing others with the opportunity to be successful meant teaching adult men, factory workers, to read and write and to do arithmetic.

As an executive at Scotiabank in Canada, it meant providing personal and technical development opportunities for my staff, involving them in the determination of how we could improve productivity while serving our customers better, and pursuing a variety of ways to reward them for exceeding their performance objectives. It also meant being thoughtful, understanding and supportive when their personal challenges created anxiety and made it difficult for them to shoulder their responsibilities at work. It meant remembering that they also had obligations to their families. And yes, it meant being honest and constructive when their performance fell short of expectations.

In my work as a Board member, providing the organization with the opportunity to be successful, meant being conscientious, carefully reviewing materials prepared for meetings, asking questions that were meant to improve the organization's outcomes, providing constructive feedback, and being critical while being enabling.

It meant working to protect the brand when I chaired the national board of a high profile charity with more than 120 member organizations across Canada. It meant being willing to listen carefully to the diverse and sometimes conflicting views of students, faculty, staff and the senior administration when I

JAMAICAN CANADIAN ASSOCIATION IN FOCUS

served as a governor of Canada's largest university. It also meant going back to university to do a course that would help me to understand the complexities of the health sector when I was asked to join the board of a hospital. For anyone who might be considering a career in politics, I can say without reservation that everything that I have just described to you, has served me well in my roles as Ontario's Minister of Children and Youth Services and Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities.

Stakeholders expressed surprise and appreciation because I listened to them, apparently an unusual experience in their long standing relationships with governments. I was not always able to do exactly what they asked, but I listened to them because I needed to understand their challenges. And while I might sometimes have disliked their tactics, I had no difficulty in separating unpleasant approaches from the issues that they needed me to understand and address. I asked questions that served to assess the validity of their case or their request for support. Sometimes I might have made them uncomfortable when my questions served to uncover a less than well considered proposal.

In both my portfolios, I was able to apply my natural desire to help people to achieve personal success. In both portfolios, our government made substantial new investments in people, and made critical improvements to policies and laws that affect the lives of children and young people. And there was more that I would have liked to have done. Sustainable and effective change takes time and resources – financial and otherwise.

I recall being told that as an employee of a very successful bank, I had probably never had to manage within the tight budgetary constraints that the not-for-profit sector lives with every day. I found that comment a bit amusing, because anyone who is familiar with the bank where I was employed for 26 years, would know that we always operated like we were going to have a difficult

year. As our CEO was known to say ... we painted rather than papering ... and we turned the lights out at night. Austerity was certainly more familiar than excess. But that's why we did so well. And as a result, Canadians enjoy a stable and reliable banking industry and can sleep well at night without fear of their bank not being around when they get awake the following day.

My bank thrived on fiscal prudence, accountability, and risk management. We learned from internal and external audit findings, and continuously took steps to improve how we did things. We believed in long term planning and long term investments. And like governments that are elected by their constituents to serve the public good, the bank's success depended on our ability to convince customers and shareholders that we had better products and service than our competitors did.

Whatever makes you successful in one sector, whether business, not-for-profit or government, would very likely go a long way to enabling your success in another sector. I am often asked for advice by people who I consider to be successful. I have come to the conclusion that we sometimes find it difficult to define personal success. We see success in others more easily than we see success in ourselves.

If you have any doubts about your success or your achievements, I would like you to think about all that you do. And don't forget what you do away from your place of work, like your volunteer activities. Don't forget the miracles that you work at home. Many of you care for others ... children, parents and partners, in addition to yourselves. That's quite the achievement in itself. So don't hesitate to feel proud of yourselves and confident that you can achieve whatever you decide you want to achieve.

Mary Anne Chambers



BLACK HISTORY MONTH IN PERSPECTIVE

The Education Committee worked jointly with JCA Program staff to host the Annual Black History Month Celebration in February, 2008. Approximately 400 students from various schools, along with their teachers, and representatives from the Community Outreach Youth Worker Program attended the function. Under the theme: *Carter G. Woodson and the Origins of Multiculturalism*, the attendees were treated to various excellent performances from the students and community entertainers. The Guest Speaker was Gwen Robinson a Historian from the Chatham – Kent Historical Society and there was a Special Presentation of *The Underground Railroad – A Canadian Story* by Dianna Braithwaite and Chris Whitely. There were various exhibits/ displays including the Canadian Forces, The Canadian Race Relations Foundation and the Jamaica Information Service.

Black History Month is celebrated annually in the United States and Canada in the month of February as a remembrance of important people and events in African American and Canadian history. One of the aims of Black History Month is to expose the harms of racial prejudice and to cultivate black self-esteem following centuries of socio-economic oppression.

Black History Month was established in 1976 by Afro-Americans for the Study of Afro-American Life and History. The month-long celebration was an expansion of Negro History Week, which was established in 1926 by Carter G. Woodson. Negro History Week was conceived as a means of undermining the foundation of the idea of black inferiority. The Negro History Week Movement took hold immediately. At first it was celebrated almost exclusively by African

Americans, taking place outside of the view of the wider society. Increasingly, however, mayors and governors, especially in the North, began endorsing Negro History Week and promoting interracial harmony. By the time of Woodson's death in 1950, Negro History Week had become a well-established cultural institution. With the rise of the Black Power Movement in the 1960s, many in the African American community began to complain about the insufficiency of a week-long celebration. In 1976, The Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History, responded to the popular call by expanding it into Black History Month to commemorate, through community activities, a more balanced and accurate picture of Black history.

Black History Month has been celebrated in Canada by groups such as the Canadian Negro Women's Association, who brought the celebration to Toronto in the 1950s. It is now officially recognized throughout Canada following a unanimous adopted motion in the House of Commons by Jean Augustine, Member of Parliament for Etobicoke-Lakeshore. Black History Month has been officially proclaimed by the City of Toronto since 1979 largely due to the efforts of the Ontario Black History Society. Every year Canadians are invited to take part in the festivities and events that honour the legacy of Black Canadians, past and present, during Black History Month. This is a time to celebrate the many achievements and contributions of Black Canadians, who, throughout history, have done so much to make Canada the culturally diverse, compassionate and prosperous nation we know today. It is also an opportunity for the majority of Canadians to learn about the experiences of Black Canadians in our society, and the vital role this community has played throughout our shared history.

Black History Month sparks an annual debate about the continued usefulness of a designated month dedicated to the history of one race. There

were even calls from an influential individual for the banning of Black History Month celebrations in Toronto schools. Other critics contend that Black History Month is irrelevant because it has degenerated into a shallow ritual. It is important to note that Woodson, creator of Negro History Month, hoped that the week would eventually be eliminated, when African-American history would be fully integrated with American history.

The Theme for the 2008 Black History Month celebration is *Carter G. Woodson and the Origins of Multiculturalism*, in honour of its founder. Known as the "Father of Black History," Carter G. Woodson holds an outstanding position in early 20th century American history. Woodson authored numerous scholarly books on the positive contributions of Blacks to the development of America. He also published many magazine articles analyzing the contributions and role of Black Americans. He reached out to schools and the general public through the establishment of several key organizations. His message was that Blacks should be proud of their heritage and that other Americans should also understand it. Carter Woodson was therefore known as a pioneer of multiculturalism.

Black History Month is an opportunity for the City of Toronto to recognize the significant contributions African Canadians have, and continue to make to the life of Toronto in such areas as education, medicine, art, culture, public service, economics, and politics. The Jamaican Canadian Association (JCA) will be hosting or participating in various events and activities to celebrate the month and encourages everyone to play their part in ensuring that African history becomes fully integrated in the Canadian society.

Submitted by: Sylvanus Thompson
Chair, Education and Cultural Committee

Approximately 400 students from various schools, along with their teachers, and representatives from the Community Outreach Youth Worker Program attended JCA's Black History Month Celebration.

Garvey the Poet – On the Blackman:

*What is in thy Bosom?
Pluck it Out-
Is it Genius, is it
Talent for Something?
Let's have it.
(1934)*

Garvey the Poet – On the Black Mother:

*Where can I find
love that never changes
Smiles that are true
and always just the same,
Caring not how the
fierce tempest rages,
Willing ever to shield
my honored name?*

***Anyone who cares
about the
environment can be
an Eco Ambassador.***

Eco AMBASSADORS:

Important developments in recent years on environmental issues such as Climate Change have caused a remarkable reawakening for many people. Most progressive people now recognize that economic, societal and environmental issues are all interconnected and that decisions and attitudes must incorporate each of these aspects.

Environment Day (June 5) is fast approaching. It is a time for reflection about our own contribution as human beings to the environment in terms of waste management, healthy eating, nature conservation and climate change. Like me, as you contemplate the impact you are making now on the future of this world, it might lead you to consider making a commitment to becoming an Eco Ambassador.

Anyone who cares about the environment can be an Eco Ambassador. As an Eco Ambassador, you are aware of your own contribution and the impact you make on the environment (your eco footprint). You are conscious that everyone and everything in this world is interconnected and we all need each other to survive. Then make a commitment because you care.

Once you have made a commitment, you will be open to learning all there is know about the about the environment. You will seek information and knowledge about the different issues that affect the environment in both negative and positive ways. You will seek opportunities to build your capacity and to learn from others.

What's more, an Eco Ambassador is someone who decides to take action to protect the environment. You can take action in small ways or big ways; every effort counts. You can take action in an individual or a collective way. You can take action at a local, national or international level. We must take

action now to ensure our children can have a better future.

Finally, as an Eco Ambassador, it is important to show leadership. With environmental leadership, you do not have to be ready on day one. You do not have to make great speeches. Whatever you do can be done in your way, influencing the people around you in a positive way, making an impact on the world, naturally!

Environment Canada has come up with 10 steps you can take as an individual to help save the environment. They are:

1: Park It: Leave your car at home for a day (or a week or a month) and try walking or biking. If work is too far away to walk, take public transit or carpool. One city bus eliminates the emissions of 40 cars.

2: Shut Down: Turn off the lights, the computer and the TV when they are not in use. Using only highly efficient and money saving appliances can reduce the electricity consumption of an average household to one tenth of the US average.

3: Where's The Beef? Try eating meat-free at least one day a week. A meat-based diet requires seven times more land than a plant-based diet. Livestock production is responsible for more climate change gasses than all the motor vehicles in the world.

4: Eat It: Choose foods produced organically, locally and in season. Support your regional farmers & farming industry: buying locally and in season is better for the environment than buying foods that have been shipped hundreds of kilometers to your local market.

5: Let It Rot: Put a composter in your backyard or use your green bin to reduce household waste. Composting organics has two key benefits: it reduces the amount of waste going to landfills and when added to your

garden, helps nourish soil and plants.

6 : Don't Be Idle: Turn off your car's engine if stopped for more than 10 seconds. If every driver of a light duty vehicle avoided idling by five minutes a day, collectively, we would save 1.8 million litres of fuel per day, almost 4500 tonnes of GHG emissions, and \$1.7 million in fuel costs each day (assuming fuel costs are \$0.95/L).

7: Keep Your Eye On The Temp: Set your thermostat above room temperature in the summer and below room temperature in the winter. For each degree you adjust, you can save five per cent on your utility bill and one per cent on your energy use.

8: **Bright Ideas:** Replace incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs (CFLs). A CFL uses only 25 per cent as much energy as an incandescent bulb and lasts 10 times longer.

9: Don't Dump It - Blue Box It!
The simple act of recycling has more impact on the environment than the average Canadian thinks. The amount of wood and paper North Americans throw away each year is enough to heat five million homes for 200 years.

10: Tell Someone: This is a great opportunity - to brag. Tell someone what you're doing to make the world a better place. Support the cause. Encourage them to get involved too!

Sources:
www.ecoambassadors.org
www.earthday.ca

Rosemarie Powell, Chair Public Relations



Marcus Garvey Afro-Centric Resource Library

The Marcus Garvey Resource Library is greatly in need of the following Afro-centric materials:

- ◆ Biographies of Black political figures – Pre 1960s
- ◆ Biographies of Black female role models
- ◆ Biographies of Black Freedom Fighters
- ◆ Biographies of Black Natural

& Social Scientists

- ◆ Biographies of Black Astronauts
- ◆ Biographies of Black Artists
- ◆ Biographies of Black Educators
- ◆ CD-Roms
- ◆ Tapes and CDs
- ◆ All forms of Black Literature
- ◆ Monographs on any areas of

Black Studies.

- ◆ Any other relevant materials
Do not contribute school texts

Contribution should be made to Marcus Garvey Resource Library, c/o Education Committee, Jamaican Canadian Association. Donors may print his or her name on or in materials being donated to the library.

African Centered Schools: Questions & Answers from The Uhuru Collective

Why is an African-centered education important for Black students?

Black students are currently exposed to many negative interpretations of what it means to be Black. Afrocentric education is important for building Black students' self-esteem through awareness of African culture and contributions, and to develop their sense of responsibility to a larger community. It goes beyond stereotypical media portrayals of Black culture as only Hip-Hop or basketball.

Wouldn't an African-centered school be exclusive rather than inclusive?

The school will be open to everyone who shares the principles and values that guide

its structure and operation. No one will be excluded.

Is African-centered schooling a return to segregation?

No, unless we are willing to say that all-girls schools, Catholic schools, French language schools and the Rainbow Program for LGBT students are also segregated. Segregation means exclusion, discrimination and oppression, and Afrocentricity opposes segregation. True equity and integration does not mean one size fits all. It is always best to provide a variety of rich options from which students can choose to serve their diverse needs and interests. How can a school be segregationist when it is open to all?

Where can I find examples of successful African-centered schools?

There are many approaches to Afrocentric education, and numerous examples of successful African-centered schools.

The following are the websites of some existing African-centered schools:

- ◆ *The Nsoromma School*
www.nsoromma.org
- ◆ *The Ijabo Shule*
www.ijaboshule.org
- ◆ *Nubian Village Academy*
www.nubianvillageacademy.com
- ◆ *Nation House*
www.nationhouse.org
- ◆ *The Lotus Academy*
www.lotusacademy.org

Education is the responsibility of the family and the school together. Families should provide a nurturing and supportive environment, but this must be distinguished from blaming

The Public Relations Committee is seeking new members. If you are interested, leave a message for Rosemarie Powell at 416-746-5772

Please note: the following event dates were submitted to the Public Relations Committee by the printing deadline

[illegible]



JamaicanCanadianAssociation

995 Arrow Road, Toronto, ON M3M 2Z5
Telephone: (416) 746-5772 Fax: (416) 746-7035
Email: info@jcassoc.org Website: jcassoc.org

MEMBERSHIP APPLICANT FORM

DATE OF APPLICATION: ____ / ____ / ____
MM DD YY

APPLICANT:

MR. ☐ MRS. ☐ MISS ☐ MS. ☐

SURNAME: _____

GIVEN NAME: _____

DATE OF BIRTH: ____ / ____ / ____ (OPTIONAL)
MM DD YY

CO-APPLICANT:

MR. ☐ MRS. ☐ MISS ☐ MS. ☐

SURNAME: _____

GIVEN NAME: _____

DATE OF BIRTH: ____ / ____ / ____ (OPTIONAL)
MM DD YY

CONTACT INFORMATION:

ADDRESS: _____
APT/UNIT STREET # STREET NAME

CITY POSTAL CODE

TELEPHONE#: HOME: _____ BUSINESS: _____ MOBILE: _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

MEMBERSHIP FEES PAID:

\$25.00 ☐

SINGLE
(25-64 yrs)

\$35.00 ☐

FAMILY
(2 adults + children under 16)

\$10.00 ☐

SENIORS
(65+)

\$10.00 ☐

YOUTH/STUDENT
(16-24 yrs)

OCCUPATION:

REFERRED TO JCA BY:

HOW DID YOU FIND OUT ABOUT JCA:

NEWSPAPER ☐ FRIEND ☐ RELATIVE ☐ OTHER: _____

SPECIAL INTEREST/ COMMENTS:

JCA is a member driven organization. We encourage all members to become active participants on our committee.
Please indicate your committee of interest:

MEMBERSHIP ☐ BUILDING ☐ EDUCATION ☐ FUNDRAISING ☐ PUBLIC RELATIONS ☐ YOUTH ☐

AGREEMENT:

THIS INFORMATION SHALL REMAIN STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL ACCORDING TO THE PRIVACY ACT AND BE USED ONLY INTERNAL BY THE JAMAICAN CANADIAN ASSOCIATION.

I / WE HEREBY AGREE TO COMPLY WITH AND SUPPORT THE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE JAMAICAN CANADIAN ASSOCIATION ACCORDING TO PAGE 2.

APPLICANT SIGNATURE

CO-APPLICANT SIGNATURE

DATE